THE BRIDAL TOUR.

Daisy Wright Field.

He was a prosperous young merchant, and she was the belle of the village; or had been. Now that the wedding was over, she would follow the custom of the community, settle down to the stern realities of married life with matronly airs, leaving her throne, as queen of the village maidens, to the next in popularity—probably her sworn enemy and rival, Polly Cleeve.

But she cared little for all this; she had been too much absorbed in the contemplation of her new finery, the details of the wedding and the anticipation of the tour they were to take immediately after. Now the trousseau had been carefully packed in trunks, band boxes, and hand bags, the wedding had gone off successfully in the little church, decorated with evergreens and easter lilies, and they were in the little, smoky general waiting room of the depot. Young Mr. Brown stepped up to the window with an important air, called for round trip tickets for two and ostentatiously opened a well-filled pocketbook.

"Where to?" queried the grinning agent.

Such absentmindedness under the tender influence of the sublime passion, was too much for human nature to bear stoically, however commendable it might be. Mr. Brown nearly fell over backwards.

"I—I believe I've actually forgotten the name of the place," he gasped in dismay, and then there was a hasty conference in the corner of the empty waiting room, with little Mrs. Brown.

"Of course I didn't forget anything," he explained to her, "but I remembered that we hadn't exactly decided. But we will go to Uncle David's of course."

"Why, of course?" queried the bride rebelliously, "haven't I just as much reason to want to visit my Aunt Ellen?"

"You may think you have," he admitted, loftily, "But woman-like, you have no doubt written a dozen long letters to your aunt and received a like number from her since our engagement, while Uncle David and I have scarce exchanged a line this summer. Besides—,"

"Besides what?" as he hesitated.

"Didn't you promise at the altar, not two hours ago, to honor and obey me?"

"It was certainly in the ceremony, which was not of my making," was the reply, while a small nose, at no time Grecian, took on a more pronounced tilt; "However I said Yes, with a decided mental reservation."

"And that was?"

"When I wanted to."

"A very feminine trick," he remarked, savagely.

"At the moment when your mind should have been above scheming, and wholly absorbed in the holiness of your vows, you were providing for a possible contingency in which you would find it desirable to disobey me."

"And the contingency, it appears, has arisen even sooner than I expected it," with disdainful scorn. Mr. Brown flushed darkly.

"Say no more about your Uncle David's," she went on, "I will not be forced into obedience to any man."

"Very well, as I shall not give up the reins of authority to any woman, we may as well say no more about your Aunt Ellen's. Well, shall we order a carriage and go home?"

"Certainly not," was the spirited reply, "you can do as you like; I am going to Aunt Ellen's."

"And I to Uncle David's."

When each stepped up and ordered a ticket to a different town, you might have knocked that agent down with a snowbird's feather. He was actually pale with astonishment, wherever he was visible behind the network of freckles adorning his jovial countenance.

Little Mrs. Brown, with head erect and elbows out aggressively, walked to the window, where she became immediately absorbed in the scene without. Her loving husband sauntered about the depot, whistling the Dead March, in what he meant to be a defiant, sprightly tone.

Twenty minutes was quite as long as either could stand this. She had just turned to go to him, when he started toward her.

"Charlie," she murmured, "let's not quarrel today. I am willing to go with you."

"No," said the husband, "I have quite made up my mind. We will go to your Aunt Ellen"s."

"Now, when I wanted the pleasure of giving up to you in our first quarrel," she began almost in tears.

"When I had so far humbled myself as to give in to you," he added.

"Still determined to assert your authority, I see," spitefully.

"Still determined to have your own way," stubbornly.

Then they parted again, and stood at separate windows, moodily watching the approach of a passenger train. As the rear coach came up even with the station, a simultaneous exclamation burst from bride and groom.

"Aunt Ellen, as I'm alive,"

"Uncle David, by all that's holy!"

As the train was to make a half-hour stop, they darted out of the door and into the car, seeking some explanation of this curious turn of affairs. As they entered, a tall silk hat and a black plumed bonnet nodded cheerfully in their direction.

"Nephew Charlie," ceremoniously announced his uncle, "this is your new aunt, Mrs. David Brown."

"Niece Dorothy," added her aunt, "allow me to introduce your new uncle, Mr. Brown."

"Aunt," gasped the bride, "you're not even married,—are you?"

"We are indeed, my dear, ceremony performed not six hours since. And we are now on our wedding tour."

"But we didn't know you were acquainted," gasped Dorothy, who had not yet recovered her breath.

"Didn't want you to know," responded Uncle Dave, "wanted to surprise you, my dear."

"Where are you going?"

"To Niagara."

"Who had the ordering of your journey?" questioned young Mr. Brown.

"Ellen, of course," was the ready reply, as Uncle David glanced affectionately at his new made wife. "Of course she was willing to let me say but I told her a husband that couldn't let his wife have her way on a little thing like her wedding tour, wasn't worthy the title."

Little Mrs. Brown shot a triumphant glance at her young husband. A moment later he gently drew her aside.

"Dear," he whispered, "we'll go wherever you want to go, if it's to the moon."

"Don't you think it would be nice Charlie," she answered, sweetly, "to go to Niagara with Uncle Dave and Aunt Ellen?"

"The very thing," he replied.

And so they settled it.—Indiana Farmer.

Lucky Rain Drops.

As the weather had been fine for quite half an hour people had donned their light spring clothing and had sallied forth into the park, feeling spruce and merry. They sallied out again, however, with undignified haste when a sudden downpour of rain came from nowhere in particular—for no one had noticed any clouds—transforming most of them into mere masses of drenched misery in less than three minutes.

Lily, her head bent forward against the wind, and with both hands holding her wind-driven skirts, started to run toward Grant monument. Not many yards had she gone when she collided with Clayton, who was scurrying toward the park corner.

"I beg your pardon," said he.

Lily stood still, her back to the wind and her wavy golden hair blowing prettily over her shoulders and framing her flushed face.

"You!" she exclaimed.

Now he was standing still too. They stared confusedly at each other, neither knowing what to say.

"I thought," he ventured at last, "that I had nearly killed somebody, I sincerely hope—But, there, I'm forgetting the rain and you've no umbrella. Hi, there—you with the tent! I'll give you five dollars for it!"

This to a ragged old man who, nevertheless, seemed to be comparatively happy, having a misshapen but inviting umbrella.

"Done!" said the old fellow, jumping eagerly at the bargain. "It ain't much of a beauty for promenading, sir, and mebbe it ain't worth so much, but—"

"It is to me," said Clayton. "Here's the money. Now," turning once more to Lily, "let's find a more sheltered place."

Beneath the ugly umbrella the young couple hurried along toward a huge tree that seemed to offer some protection from wind and rain.

"How strange," remarked Clayton, "that we should suddenly find ourselves journeying along together again once more, just as we used to do, as though we had never quarreled! At this moment I can scarcely realize that all is over—"

"It isn't," snapped the girl emphatically, "I mean, the rain isn't over yet. But it will soon be, and—and you really needn't have bothered about an umbrella."

"Well, you need not stand so far away, if you do hate me."

He took her arm and pulled her, ever so gently toward him.

She noticed, as she leaned nearer, that his heart was pounding violently, but hoped he was not as observant of the fluttering of her own.

"I suppose Wilfred Gray would begrudge me these few moments with you if he knew."

"Let us talk about something impersonal," said she. "The rain for instance."

"Don't you find that a sufficiently dampening subject already?"

"Well, then—um—er—Oh, yes! Have you seen Miss Gertie Terry lately?"

"I have, very lately. I tell you, I like Gertie Terry tremendously."

"I know you do. It's an old attachment."

She made a proud but unsuccessful attempt to free her arm from his.

"Why shouldn't I like her?" he continued. "I'm to be best man at her wedding next month. She marries my friend Bentley."

Lily unconsciously breathed a sigh of relief.

"Aren't you happy, alone here with me, Lily?" he queried, with sudden and uncontrollable tenderness.

"Goodness! There's a perfect stream running down this slope. My skirt is all draggly!"

"What a thoughtless fool I am!" he exclaimed. "Here, step up on this bench."

He helped her upon the bench, and took his place beside her, and both laughed again like children.

"I wouldn't part with this umbrella now for a million. Why, where on earth is your engagement ring, Lily?"

"What has that to do with the umbrella?"

"Answer me. You must. What has become of your ring?"

"I'm sure I don't know what he did with it, after I sent it back to him."

"Then you're not—.You're free?"

Silence.

"Lily guess what I'm going to do."

"Don't you dare. Remember, you said when we parted you would never forgive me for flirting with Wilfred. That's why I grew reckless and engaged myself to him. That's why—"

"Hang Wilfred! I'm about to kiss the tip of the prettiest ear in Chicago!"

"If you do I'll never forgive you. Besides, they can see us plainly from the boulevard."

"I don't care if the whole world—"

A nondescript, woebegone woman, with a sodden hat, its limp black feathers trailing mournfully across her cheek, suddenly made her appearance in front of the bench and paused shiveringly, as if anxious to remain in the company of two beings so warm and happy looking in the midst of all the bleakness.

"I'm a stranger here. Won't you please tell me the way out of the park?"

"Certainly, madam; go that way," replied Clayton, pointing anywhere.

She had scarcely disappeared when the history making umbrella, in response to the invitation of a passing gust of wind, turned suddenly inside out. Clayton, after a moment's dismay, reversed the ludicrous looking object, and held it over them by its apex, the homely bulldog handle standing on guard far above.

Then he repeated his question to Lily—the only question in the world at that moment.

"Won't you forgive the past, Lily?" Won't you let bygones be bygones, and wear my ring once more?"

The "inverted bowl" of the umbrella was brought down so far over their heads that it completely hid them from view, and for two foolish young lovers the beating rain was turned into a golden mist.

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A policeman's finger tapped Clayton sharply on the arm.

"You can sit on the bench if you like, but you're not allowed to scratch the paint by standing."

The bewildered couple suddenly became conscious that the sun was shining brightly, and that half a dozen idlers stood there in the walk, gaping curiously at them.

"Nor you don't need your umbrella now," added the policeman, with an incipient grin. "It's been fine for the last half hour."—Chicago Tribune.

Fattening Hogs.

The Gainesville Sun says: It is about the time when farmers will begin to fatten their hogs, so as to convert them into pork before Christmas, as well as convert their corn into a higher-priced product, says The De-Funiak Stockman. But it has been demonstrated at the experimental stations that the animals require much more mineral matter in their food than is usually provided for them, for it is well known that it is from the mineral elements that the bones are produced, and when the bone-producing elements are lacking the animals cannot thrive. This was demonstrated by feeding wood ashes or bonemeal added in small quantities to the grain, with the result that a smaller quantity of grain is required to produce the same weight as from grain alone, thus showing that grain does not contain enough bone-producing matter to promote growth of the animal if confined or restricted, so long as one element in its food is insufficiently provided. Three lots of hogs were fed by Professor Henry to determine the effects of mineral matter in comparison with corn only, one lot receiving nothing but corn, another lot receiving wood ashes with corn, and another lot bonemeal with the corn. For every 100 pounds live weight gained the pigs consumed 629 pounds of corn alone. Where ashes were added 491 pounds of corn produced 100 pounds of live weight, and with bonemeal and corn only 487 pounds of corn were required to produce 100 pounds live weight gained in the pigs. These facts are conclusive that bonemeal or ashes given with corn is more economical feeding than when corn is used exclusively, as well as protecting against disease.